

in the
other.

both hands
tremble.

he studies the
yellow paper,
puts the cigar
into his
mouth,
inhales.

he coughs
keeping the
cigar
in his
mouth.

he stops
coughing,
adjusts the
cigar,
straightens his
glasses,
rises to
bet.

he is in
his mid-
sixties.

as he walks
up the
aisle
I notice his
shoes —
tennis shoes.

a bright
red.

when he
returns he
sits very
still.

as the race
goes off
and
unfolds
he sits
very
still.

the race
finishes
and he still
sits very
still.

the jocks
bring their
mounts
back in.

suddenly he
rises
as a jock
gallops
his horse
by.

"HEY, LAFFIT, YOU
ASSHOLE, WHO
TOLD YOU
THAT YOU COULD
RIDE A
HORSE!"

the jock just
rides his horse
on in,
he's heard it
all
before.
they all
have.

the horseplayer
sits down
biting into his
cigar.

he consults the
yellow
paper
again.

he's going to
give it another
try.

and I am
too.

MAILBAG

a schizophrenic
in Dallas
writes me of his
problems:
he
hears voices,
he's
hooked on
Beckett.
also his shrink
makes him
wait too long
in the waiting
room.

he's supported
by his
mother
and he follows
softball.

he recently
won
2nd prize
in a chili
cook-off.

you ought to come
to Austin,
he writes,
you'd love
Austin.

I file his letter
in with
other letters
from
schizophrenics.

I've been to
Austin.